H. Martin

The Westminster Doctrine
of the
Inspiration of Scripture

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THE

Westminster Doctrine

OF THE

Inspiration of Scripture

(WITH A PREFATORY NOTE ON THE FREE CHURCH COLLEGE COMMITTEE'S REPORT, AND WITH REMARKS ON DR MARCUS DODS'S RECENT SERMON.)

BY THE LATE

HUGH MARTIN, D.D.

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PREFATORY NOTE

ON THE

COLLEGE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

SAYS the Westminster Confession :—"It pleased the Lord to commit the same [*i.e.*, His revelation of Himself and His declaration of His will], wholly unto writing." The Lord *Himself* committed them to writing.

Says the College Committee : *—"The revelation of God and the declaration of His will are committed wholly to writing." They *are* committed to writing. That's all. The College Committee says not *by whom.*

It thus appears that while the Westminster Confession, in its first section, and indeed in its first sentence, affirms the doctrine of the divine authorship of Holy Scripture, the Free Church College Committee so quotes from that section and from that part of it, as to avoid affirming that doctrine.

I shall not speak of this in the language of blame, because the Committee may have a satisfactory explanation to give. But failing that, I am persuaded they owe the Church a serious and ample apology.

Satisfactory explanation is not by any means to be found in the fact that they go on to quote the second section of the Confession. For, in the *first* place, that second section is devoted to the affirmation, not of any doctrine of inspiration, but solely of the doctrine of the Canon. Though the word "inspiration" occurs in it, it pronounces no judgment on what inspiration, as a process, was, or may be supposed to have been. It pronounces on the question,—What are the books to which the characteristic of inspiration belongs? In the *second* place, that being the object of the section,—namely, to affirm the doctrine of the Canon,—it was suitable and sufficient, for the Westminster Divines, in view of what they had said in the first section, to quote now the scriptural phrase, "given by inspiration of God," *without explanation ;* which it would have been absurd to do had the section been designed to be an avowal or confession of the doctrine of inspiration. In the *third* place, the Committee cannot justify their omission of the doctrine of the divine authorship of the Scriptures, by pointing to their quotation of the words, "the only rule of faith and life," because while this affirms the authority of the Scriptures, it is impossible to maintain the doctrine of their divine authority except as based on the distinct and prior doctrine of their divine authorship. And, in the *fourth* place, if they were

* "Notwithstanding, the Committee are not prepared to say that Professor Smith's views infer a denial on his part, either directly, or constructively, of the doctrine that 'in the books of the Old and New Testaments, the revelation of God and the declaration of His will are committed wholly unto writing,' and that 'they are all given by inspiration of God to be the only rule of faith and life.' The Committee lay stress on this, because the doctrine now referred to is not only the technical ground in the Confession which must regulate ecclesiastical procedure, but is really the essential and fundamental truth which it is vital to maintain."

to make so serious an omission from, and misquotation of, the first section, designing to make reparation when quoting from the second, it is singularly strange and vexing that they have missed their opportunity, by abstaining from quoting the striking and very decided expression—"Holy Scripture, or *the Word of God written.*"

The matter becomes the more serious, and such that it cannot be passed over in silence, when the Committee go on to say, that "the doctrine now referred to is not only the technical ground in the Confession which must regulate ecclesiastical procedure, but is really the essential and fundamental truth which it is vital to maintain." For who, in his senses, will say that it is "vital to maintain" that divine revelations have been committed to writing—not saying *by whom?* Or, who that knows the meaning and ends of a Confession of Faith will count it "vital" to be allowed to have the use of a scriptural phrase such as "given by inspiration"? Or, who that knows a tenth part of what has been written about the nature, meaning and effects of inspiration, would peril the simple and sublime truth of the divine authorship of Holy Scripture on a single vocable, such as "inspiration"? And, again, how can you expect intelligent men to yield to the claim of divine authority for these writings, if you have failed to vindicate the claim of divine authorship? And, finally, who that reads the first section of the Westminster Confession, will tolerate that the College Committee should aver that they have set forth "the technical ground in the Confession which must regulate ecclesiastical procedure," when, on the contrary, they have given the most striking recent illustration of the adage about the play of Hamlet and the part thereof? No, verily. Ecclesiastical procedure, when necessary, must be regulated by the putting of the question: "Do you—yea or nay—believe that the Old and New Testaments are the revelation of God and His declaration of His will committed wholly to writing by Himself? You avowed your belief of that, when you signed the Westminster Confession. Do you, or do you not, believe it still?"

The fact is that against the representation given by the College Committee, Coleridge would have been under no provocation to write his "Confessions of an inquiring spirit." Against the Westminster doctrine (no doubt under a misapprehension of it connected with the ridiculous idea of "dictation,") he poured out, in that well known little volume, one of the fiercest tirades in the history of theological literature.

I will not affirm, far less insinuate, that, in the point on hand, the College Committee have failed in their duty *wittingly.* But in their duty they have failed—failed seriously. And I trust that in the coming General Assembly they will be able to explain, or failing that, to apologise to the Church for the grievous injustice they have done to the very first of her confessional truths—the doctrine which alone bears up her great duty of confessing, and bears her out in every separate doctrine she confesses.

H. M.

MONTROSE, *April* 1877.

THE

WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE

OF THE

INSPIRATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

I HAVE thought that, without mingling much in the exciting debates of the passing hour, I might do an acceptable service to humble Christian souls, by pointing out and fastening attention upon the deliverance which the Westminster Confession gives on the doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture, and which, in its wisdom, simplicity, grandeur, and easily demonstrable verity, has satisfied the Church for centuries, and will doubtless continue to express her convictions till the Lord shall come again.

There is something singularly quiet, and dignified, and satisfactory in the form in which the Westminster divines have put this great truth. Affirming the validity of natural religion, yet its insufficiency to give that knowledge of God and of His will which is necessary to salvation, and that in the view thereof, it has pleased the Lord, during a long and varied historical development, to reveal Himself and declare His will unto the Church, they add that it has also "pleased the Lord [Himself] to commit the same [His own revelation] wholly to writing."* So that the God of heaven has proceeded author, and the Old and New Testaments are the complete edition of His published works. He who on Mount Sinai wrote the "ten words" on two tables of stone, has, not without great variation of method, but as truly, com-

* I. "Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of His will which is necessary unto salvation: therefore *it pleased the Lord*, at sundry times and in diverse manners, to reveal Himself, and to declare that His will unto His Church; and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and the world, *to commit the same wholly unto writing*, which maketh Holy Scripture to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased.

II. "Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these [naming them],—all which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life."—*Westminster Confession, chap. I. sections i. and ii.*

mitted to writing His entire revelation, and the result is what we now call the Bible. The Bible is, therefore, in the simplest which is also the fullest meaning of the term, the written Word of God,—of divine authorship, throughout and throughout.

Now it would not be easy to exhaust the commendation due to the wisdom of the position which the Westminster Confession thus takes up. Very singularly it is its glory and perfection to be at once the *minimum* and the *maximum* of what is required in the matter on hand. As an office-bearer in Christ's Church, I will not profess less, and I will not consent to be bound to more. How indeed could I profess less than that without which I could not profess, or confess, anything as *of faith?* And I rejoice that the least that I could possibly confess, is the utmost that my Confession asks me to confess.

In particular, it brings me into no bondage on questions of *verbal* or *plenary* inspiration, or of inspirations of superintendence, elevation, and other measures and degrees, according to a classification that was more canvassed some forty years ago than now. In fact, at this point the word "inspiration" has not yet occurred at all, neither reason nor opportunity for it having occurred. And it is eminently instructive to notice when and why it does occur.

In the second section, the Confession enumerates the separate books which go to constitute the Scriptures of God's authorship,—"Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written." But none of these came ready made from heaven. They came from the pens of human authors: that without doubt in all cases, in some obviously and *ex facie*, as the Epistles of Paul, and James, and John, and Peter. Here then are two concurring facts concerning these Scriptures:—God committed them to writing; men wrote them. Inspiration is the *tertium quid* or connecting link. The concurrence and harmony, the actual co-existency and unifying of these two facts, are mediated and secured by what is called inspiration. Inspiration is that by which this result is obtained, and we know nothing more about it. It is just that action of the divine will which brings the two authorships—the divine and the human—into concurrence, giving to each its place, and doing injustice to neither. It was needful, because what men were to write was to be the Word of God; because what God was to commit to writing He was to commit to writing by the instrumentality not merely of men, but of the authorship of men. *That is Inspiration*, defined not as in itself, but by what rendered it necessary, and by what it has accomplished. In authorship exclusively human, there is, of course, no room for it. In authorship exclusively divine there is neither room for it nor necessity. There was no inspiration when by His own finger God committed to writing the ten commandments on tables of stone. Divine authorship through the instrumentality of human authorship;—*that* calls for inspiration; *that* is what inspiration effects. And if a definition of inspiration is required, inspiration

is *what effects that.* More about inspiration, we do not and we cannot know. More, our Confession does not profess to teach or call us to believe or profess,—scarcely even that, except inferentially. Without any exposition, it simply quotes (in a connection, however, that fairly implies that), concerning the Old and New Testaments, the scriptural assertion that they are "all given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. iii. 16).

For the avowal and maintenance, indeed, of what it is vital on this great doctrine to avow and maintain, the word "inspiration" is not so indispensable as many seem to have thought. My cordially esteemed friend, Dr Marcus Dods, gets impatient with it, and all but proposes to put it out of court. For my part, when I think of the weary waste of intellect and the abundant beating of the air that have transpired around the word,—not excluding all reference (I am sorry to say) to the specimen of that same which my friend's recent sermon itself affords, —I am not sure that it would be a bad plan. Magnificently, at any rate, does our Confession enable us to answer the ulterior question which Dr Dods goes on to ask. "For, put the word 'inspiration' out of court for a while, and what remains?" It remains that the Lord committed His own revelation to writing.

In the maintenance of this position, it is evident that very little theology can be required, and, indeed, that the province of general reasoning on the subject must be extremely limited. *Guard the question: Indicate the line of proof.* These are the two duties incumbent. Protect the position from misapprehension, irrelevancies, and confusions; and adduce, if possible, suitable proof of it,—that is to say, bring forward, with sufficient clearness, divine testimony for what you thus profess your own faith and claim the faith of others.—By God's blessing I hope to do this with a fair measure of success in the few pages that follow. And then I shall decline the ambition and affectation of prolonging an argument after it is really closed.

GUARDING THE POSITION.

I. In guarding from misapprehensions the grandly simple position of the Westminster Confession that it pleased the Lord to commit His revelation to writing; it seems obvious to remark—

1. In the first place, that nothing but some strange misapprehension could have given rise to the debates that have taken place about *verbal* and *plenary* inspiration, or given rise even to these words at all,—specially given rise to a contention in which they have been pitted against each other. Are the Scriptures verbally inspired, or plenarily? Was there ever a more futile question? Who that asks it has the least idea about the idea which he thinks he has? Range the question up beside the proposition, "The Lord committed His revelation wholly to writing," and how its absurdity comes out! Or if necessary, take a parallel case,—which will be advantageous, at any rate, in the

interests of reverence. Here am I at present, committing my poor thoughts to writing. I suppose I must do it "verbally," if I use words! And then the little tractate will be "verbally" mine. And if it be not any other body's, as I intend that it shall not be, I suppose it will be "plenarily" mine. Now such trifling may be very amusing concerning anything that *I* may commit to writing, but how it came to be indulged in without being seen to be mere trifling when applied to what the God of heaven has been pleased to commit to writing, it is hard to see. Certainly it must have arisen from serious misapprehension of what the Church believes on the matter in hand.

2. Misapprehension, also, it must evidently be, that has given rise to any serious difficulty in reference to translations of Scripture. The difficulty is sometimes put in this way: "What is the use of insisting on any special doctrine of inspiration, when you know it cannot apply to our English version? The original Hebrew and Greek may have been inspired, but you do not surely claim inspiration for a mere translation?" It would thus appear that inspiration is conceived of as some spiritual dye or colour or flavour which is washed out or evaporates in the course of translation, and that however good and satisfactory the translation may be. For it is not any hypothetical insufficiency, erroneousness, or general badness of the translation to which this melancholy result is supposed to be assignable, but to translation generally. But this is just a misapprehension, or a refusal to accept in its plain and simple meaning the great truth that the Scriptures are the Word of God,—God's Word committed to writing by Himself. For just try the idea in relation to any other book and its authorship. Here, we shall say, is Newton's Principia. It was originally written in Latin. This, let us say, is an English version. Is it not Newton's Principia? Is the authorship of it gone in the process of translation? That is the point. Is the written Word of God no longer God's written Word, because it has been translated into English?

Holy men of old, as they were moved and guarded by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, wrote each of them respectively, what God decreed they should write as their contributions to a volume which He intended to be His own,—His own written Word and published works,—His wondrous gift to the sons of men. The good Spirit of God is too abounding in His goodness to have written on His volume, churlishly, the formula, "Rights of translation reserved." And the same all-wise Spirit of God is too abundant in wisdom and too sparing of miracle to have undertaken its translation into all languages (or any) Himself. But a great part of His Scripture being non-miraculously translated ere the volume was completed, the Spirit of the Lord, infinitely far from the character alike of churl and of pedant, and not despising the translation because not divinely perfect, —stamping with His approbation for ever the principle that the *translated* Word of God is still the *Word of God* when translated, and

takes rank with yet untranslated Scripture,—scrupled not freely to quote, and to wield as still possessing divine character and authority, what the Seventy of Alexandria had written in Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. And if He,—being, in His graciousness, not ill to please, but pleased with reverential honest effort,—counts translated Scripture God's Scripture still, *we*, surely, may be content.

3. To what but to mere misapprehension are we to trace the difficulty that some have expressed in believing in the inspiration of Scripture arising from the fact that the different human writers write each in his own literary style,—so that Paul, for instance, is always like himself, and quite distinguishable from Peter or John? For it would puzzle anybody who feels a difficulty in this direction, to say wherein it really lies. I greatly question whether it has not from the first been more a piece of intellectual gymnastic, a theologico-literary conundrum, than an honest difficulty to a serious mind. Gaussen, in his excellent and well-known volume, has dealt with it. But that is fully a generation ago, and I greatly doubt whether it is quite wise to hand down to those that are coming after us the idea that they cannot discuss properly the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture without seriously laying lance in rest against an old scarecrow like this. What greater reason could there be for Paul writing like John, than for John writing like Paul? Or why should either of them write like anybody but himself? And if they could have done so, what would it have been but a curious feat, a sport, a freak, a juggle, pardonable in an hour of mirth or mystification?—to be kept far away from a serious or sacred hour. Could the Israelites have made their harps to sound like trumpets, how inconceivable that they should have put the trick in practice in their last melancholy dirge ere they hanged their harps upon the willows, or in their first glad acclaim when they resumed them!

Does it ever occur to those who find a difficulty in the variations of style among the various writers of Scripture to consider what effect the suppression of these variations would have had on questions pertaining to the genuineness and authenticity of these writings? Would it not have barred them out of court when coming forward to claim inspiration, by raising the previous question of their common honesty or truthfulness?

In a word, any real difficulty here arises from misapprehension of what inspiration was called into play to accomplish, and, of course, has accomplished even unto divine perfection. It was called into play to mediate between, and to harmonize in one perfect result, the two facts, and the respective interests, of divine authorship and human authorship. The idea that it should accomplish this in the particular way of proceeding first of all to deface the human authorship in each case, or in any case, of the peculiar traces, marks, and evidences of its own identity, is a supreme absurdity such as the creatures of God,

called pen and ink, ought not to be subjected to the degradation of being compelled to assist in exposing.

Perhaps the best way of exploding this professed difficulty is to insist on its rendering help where it has tried to hinder. And that should be somewhat easily accomplished by the aid of some such illustration as the following :—

A well-known English writer of the name of Hervey desired to convey to his fellow-men his sentiments on the great and vital doctrine of justification by faith. He might have constructed his intended piece of authorship on any one of a vast variety of plans. He might have written a letter to a friend. He might have written a sermon or discourse. He might have presented his views on the subject in the same direct and didactic form as Dr Owen or Dr James Buchanan, in their respective volumes on the same doctrine. He chose another scheme. He composed a work in the form of a dialogue—the well-known dialogue between "Theron and Aspasio." He conjured up, that is to say, two imaginary persons, and in the conversation, the discussion, the debate in which he engages them, he brings out in a lively and very striking way, the various aspects of the theme which he desired to elucidate. He does this by the intervention of these imaginary characters, over whom, being imaginary, he has unlimited control and power to cause them speak exactly as he pleases.

The Lord God Almighty desired to convey to His creatures His views of the same great doctrine. He might have done so directly and immediately without the intervention of any creature, real or imaginary, handling the completed treatise to the sons of men, as he handed the tables of stones to Moses, out of the glory of the Shechinah. But he chose another plan. He composed His treatise in the form of an epistle—the well-known Epistle of Paul to the Romans. So far as considerations of an *à priori* kind are concerned, it might have been an ideal epistle—the writer and his correspondents being as imaginary as Theron and Aspasio. And then there would have been no difficulty in understanding how that God Himself was the author of it. But the Lord God conjured up no imaginary Paul. Being the Lord God Almighty, He had at His command a veritable living writer, over whom He had, as the Lord God Almighty, as much control as Hervey had over the imaginary Theron and Aspasio, having also as much power to express his own mind through the living voluntary conscious action of the mind of the actual Apostle, as the human writer, Hervey, had to express his by the ideal conversationalists of his fancy.

For this is precisely God's prerogative, namely, that by *Him* the substance of *reality* can be secured and introduced, combined with the unbounded control which no creature can have over another,—which a creature can have only over the ideal creature of his imagination. So that as thoroughly as Theron and Aspasio, each in his own style

and character,—the character and style that Hervey had assigned to them respectively—spoke at Hervey's will, and served his purpose and expressed his views; so thoroughly and truly Paul, in his own characteristic style, the style which by a long and varied dispensation of tuition in providence and grace God had assigned and given to him, —wrote at God's will and served God's purpose, and expressed God's mind and views,—which were also, with profound intelligence and intuitions, his own.

Or, to enlarge the scope of the illustration. It is conceivable that in order to show unto the ages to come, the "blessedness of them which endure," the Lord might have proceeded author of a purely ideal drama, into which He should condescend Himself to enter, as one of the *dramatis personæ*, answering the sufferer out of the whirlwind. That is at least conceivable. But being the God of the spirits of all flesh, and the God of Providence, He has at His command the substratum of reality to bring in, underneath the ideal forms of dramatic literature; and as much command over veritable living men as the dramatist has over his mere *dramatis personæ*. And accordingly, —as dramatic as if it were ideal, yet as historical as by real manifestations to Adam and to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and to "these" two "men Noah and Daniel"* *God* has become historical, —we have the wondrous Book of Job; the Lord Himself having been pleased to commit it wholly to writing. Never was a great litterateur, himself a dramatist, more miserably mistaken than when he thought such an intemperate outcry as the following relevant against evangelical doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. "What! were the hollow truisms, the unsufficing half-truths, the false assumptions and malignant insinuations of the supercilious bigots, who corruptly defended the truth; were the impressive facts, the piercing outcries, the pathetic appeals, and the close and powerful reasoning with which the poor sufferer—smarting at once from his wounds, and from the oil of vitriol which the orthodox *liars for God* were dropping into them—impatiently, but uprightly and holily, controverted this truth, while in will and in spirit he clung to it, were both dictated by an infallible Intelligence? Alas!——." But, alas! we have quite enough of this utter misapprehension of the claim implied in the Divine authorship of the Book of Job. That claim no more fathers "hollow truisms" and "oil of vitriol" consolations on the God of truth and love, than Samuel Taylor Coleridge, because he wrote the "Ancient Mariner," can be held to believe that ——. But I haven't the weird and wondrous little thing beside me to quote from. 'Tis enough. The grand old talker was mistaken on the *status questionis*,—as crowds of vastly littler men are mistaken still.

* "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God."—Ezek. xiv. 14, also *verses* 16, 18, and 20. These most solemn utterances (not to mention James v. 11), will for ever protect the book of Job from being accounted a mere drama or myth, at least by any man who fears the Lord and trembles at His Word.

II. These may suffice as instances of the *misapprehensions* with which this simple and sublime doctrine has had to contend: and in now seeking to guard it similarly against the effects of *confusion*, I shall briefly insist on a few vital and by no means mysterious distinctions.

1. In the first place, it seems scarcely necessary to say that we must distinguish between the question of Inspiration and the question of the Canon. With regard to inspiration the only vital question is, What effect has it produced upon the writings of which it can be affirmed that they are inspired? And the answer is, It has brought it to pass that these writings are of Divine authorship—parts of that record of His own revelation of Himself and declaration of His will which God has been pleased to commit to writing. And if men insist on putting the question in the form, What is Inspiration? we must just insist on answering it so as to tie down the discussion to the same lines as before; Inspiration is that sustained action of the divine will on the several human writers of the Scriptures which has secured that what they severally wrote should form component parts of the written volume which God was engaged in composing, and which we now have as "the Old and New Testaments or the Word of God written."

The question of the Canon is—What are the several books or tractates of which this is true? And, of course, this again raises the question of the nature and amount of evidence that can be pleaded, in each case, in support of a claim so serious. There can be no doubt that this opens up a line of investigation which cannot be successfully prosecuted without an amount of scholarship and learning to which the intelligent membership of the Church generally cannot possibly hope to attain. But with regard to the Old Testament, in the first place, it is matter of thankfulness that no scholarship or learning is required to apprehend the bearing of the fact that the Canon of the Old Testament had been completed, and even translated into Greek, long before the day of Christ; that in His day it was just what it is now; and that by freely quoting from it, the "Faithful Witness" stamped it for all ages with the seal of His divine approbation. And with regard to the New Testament, it is eminently satisfactory for the ordinary membership of the Church to know that it is but an extremely small amount of serious doubt, all things considered, that has existed on the subject among reverential Christian scholars, and that between such portions of the New Testament as might be said to have least claim to be counted canonical, and such apocryphal writings as might be said to make the closest approach to something like a claim, there is recognised by all competent judges such a wide gap as should keep men's minds very much at ease indeed. At the same time, while the Church generally is in this matter very far from being seriously dependent on the labours of scholars and critics, nothing could be more ridiculous than to scowl upon or discourage them in their studies, *unless* indeed it were the expectation that they could possibly or legitimately result in anything

of real magnitude, or of serious importance to the faith of any of God's unlearned but honest children anywhere, from the rising of the sun to where he hath his going down.

2. We must distinguish between Inspiration and Revelation.

Inspiration presupposes revelation, and is concerned with the recording of it, or with (in the language of the Confession) the committing of it to writing. And the argument concerning inspiration presupposes that the argument on the "Evidences of Divine Revelation" —the old phrase for what is now called "Apologetics"—has been led and closed. Moreover the divine revelation which inspiration presupposes and proceeds to record, is not any or every kind of revelation, but God's own personal revelation of Himself and declaration of His will in its bearing on "us men and our salvation." Such revelation is personal, direct, free, sovereign, supernatural, and (in part at least) vocal as when a man speaketh with his friend. Were it not for this, —were the revelation merely naturalistic, then the record of it, for anything that appears, might with all propriety, be naturalistic too. I can imagine neither plea nor necessity for God to interpose personally to put in writing a revelation which He had not personally interposed to give.

Of course, without special personal divine interposition there is a considerable amount of revelation of God's being and perfections afforded by nature,—by the works of God's hand, the constitution that He has given to man, and the providence and government which He constantly and silently exercises over him. God could not create such a world as this, and put and keep in it an intelligent being like man, without inlaying into the workmanship of His hands, and into His providence over it, incontestible evidence of His own existence, and considerable proofs, because traces of His wisdom, power, and goodness. No one doubts, and our Confession in its very first clause admits, that in this there is a source of knowledge of God, or if you will, of revelation, thoroughly valuable and important; while science, glorious science, is continually reading it off to us more and more fully, some of her unwitting sons labouring in the service as the hardest driven Gibeonites we have ever chanced to come across sweating in their toil. Long and successfully may they toil, and much may they bring to light in proof of God's *necessary* existence and God's *necessary* perfections! But if God hath non-necessary purposes,—purposes of His own free, good, and sovereign will, then a kind of revelation generically different is requisite if we are to become acquainted with them.

The difference may be seen by such reference to the rainbow as Science and Scripture severally enable us to make. You cannot look on the "triumphal arch that spans the sky when storms begin to part," especially if you know anything of what science teaches concerning it, without learning better and truer lessons from it than the poet when he saw in it, according to his "childhood's sight, a mid-

way station given, for happy spirits to alight betwixt the earth and heaven." You learn from it that the great Creator has an infinite mastery and command of the principles of good taste or beauty, of optical science, and geometrical relations. And you are quite sure that if "the Lord is a man of war" (Exod. xv. 3), *à fortiori*, the Lord is a man of science. You have the revelation of nature for it.

But if, while you are thus in rapture contemplating one of nature's most beautiful appearances, and silently adoring the God whom to this extent it reveals, a *voice* breaks upon your ear,—"I created that bow, it is mine: Behold, I do set my bow in the cloud; and I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant" (Gen. ix. 8-17); have you not a wholly, generically, gloriously different kind of "revelation" now, in comparison with which the former is hardly entitled to be called revelation at all? It is in *this* sense that we speak of "revelation," when we plead for inspiration to record it, so that the record may be divine as the revelation is. It is personal revelation, free, sovereign, such as "it pleased the Lord" to give; revelation of the counsel of His will; not *ex necessitate naturæ*, whether necessity of God's nature, or man's nature, or any kind of nature; but of the freedom and sovereignty of the divine will; revelation of the grace of God which is the goodness of God in the highest reaches of that blessed attribute, of which Lord Stair speaks so wisely when he says:—"We must explain God's goodness with congruity to His nature, which comprehends His freedom, whereby it is not congruous to Him to communicate all the good He can, which would never terminate or be stable, but that He acteth freely, and that it were *impossible for us to know what good He hath done or will do, if He had not revealed it.*"*

But a greater than Lord Stair has reasoned in this same line of thought. "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Much concerning human nature may be learned by observation and general human consciousness. But the things of a particular man, his personal thoughts and purposes, what man can know save the spirit of the man himself which is in him? Even so, if God has thoughts and purposes towards sinful man, thoughts of peace and purposes of grace; if He has in store what can

* See this sentence quoted and commented upon with admirable appreciation by A. Taylor Innes, Esq., in his article on "Lord Stair's Vindication of the Divine Perfections," in the current number of the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, a service for which Mr Taylor Innes deserves very hearty thanks. I have the very greatest pleasure in asking my intelligent reader's best attention to another clause in the sentence quoted, besides that which for my present purpose I have put in italics. I mean, of course, the singularly precious proposition, "It is not congruous to God to communicate all the good He can," with the equally striking reason so quietly assigned for the truth of it, "which would never terminate nor be stable." All this is fitted to lead out into glorious views of grace; nor is there any inconsistency, but rather mutual illustrativeness, between what is here said and God's marvellous question, "What more could I have done for my vineyard that I have not done?"

be called "the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him;" if, in the searchless depths of His wisdom, there be what can properly be designated as "the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God hath ordained before the world unto our glory;" these being such as neither can the eye see nor the ear hear, nor the heart or reason of man discover, it is impossible that we can know them, unless God reveal them to us by His Spirit, even the Spirit who searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God;" "the Spirit which is of God," and which those who believe receive, "that they may know the things that are" not *ex necessitate*, but "freely given us of God" (1 Cor. ii. 1-16). Such is the revelation of which Paul was a minister: in which we have "the testimony of God," "the mind of Christ," "the things of the Spirit;" personal revelation, supernatural, of course, free and sovereign, historical also, and often vocal; not naturalistically developed, and, therefore, not to be naturalistically recorded, but, personally, by God's own Spirit, making the written record personally divine, even as the revelation is. For that, as I take it, is Paul's meaning, when he says, "Which things we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (verse 13). But this is trenching on the line of proof, while we are as yet but merely clearing the ground and guarding the question or the position.

Such is the kind of revelation which we plead for when we would justify the inspiration which we advocate; supernatural; transcending nature even unto such extent that the whole material universe of God might have been gloriously honoured to have been called in to assist in effecting it. Who that understands how the whole material universe sinks into nothing if intelligence retires from looking on it, and is lighted up again in all its glory if intelligence returns, would for a moment doubt, that had no other outward means been available for communicating God's mind, in sovereign saving grace to man, the stars in their courses might have been proud to range themselves night after night in heaven's blue vault so as to spell out such sentences as these:—"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost:" "Come unto me, and I will give you rest:" "Look unto me and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else:" "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins:" "Thy sins be forgiven thee; go in peace." Well might Mazzaroth, both in season and out of season; and Arcturus, with his sons; and Pleiades, with all their sweet influences, have yielded themselves servants to proclaim the sweeter influences of the kingdom of grace, till on the entablature of midnight heaven there had flamed out in stellar radiance the telegrams: "There shall be a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness:" "By grace are ye saved:" "It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure." And as, while the campaign lasts, the general changes his watchword night after night; even so might earth's expectant children, ever as the light of day began to

wane, have been seen congregating under heaven's canopy oracular, to read in such stellar symbols another and another message from the throne of God, another and another thought from the intellect and heart of the God of their redemption. And as the covenant of God's grace for our salvation and "our glory" (1 Cor. ii. 7), was thus, by the ministry of planets and of constellations, read off to a listening world, all nature's grandest elements being impressed into the work of revealing the hope that is set before us, who will venture to deny that this were a subjection of nature, or the material worlds, to the interests and history of our redemption, all too inadequate to give expression to the transcendant preciousness of that revelation which the Scriptures record as exceedingly abundantly, yea, infinitely, above all that nature can convey? And yet, "on the principles laid down in these days by some men who profess themselves friends of Christianity, but who are nevertheless subverters of the truth once delivered to the saints, evidence in proof of a divine revelation is impossible, being beyond the power of God Himself to furnish. Even should they see it written in characters of fire in the firmament that the Bible is the Word of God, they could not believe, so true is the declaration of the Faithful and the True Witness;—'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.'" *

3. We must distinguish between inspiration and spiritual enlightenment. The latter belongs to all gracious souls, according to the faithful promise made to those who obey the Gospel call,—whereby indeed they are enabled to obey it: "Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you" (Prov. i. 23); or again: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. v. 14). This illumination stands related to the spiritual understanding of the written Word. Inspiration stands related to the writing of it. Even those who, by inspiration, wrote it needed spiritual enlightenment to understand what they had written: and the distinction is very clearly put by the apostle when he represents the prophets as the humble students of their own writings: "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when he testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pet. i. 10, 11). And so distinct was their inspiration from revelation on the one hand, and from spiritual enlightenment on the other, that what their inspiration had enabled them *perfectly* to record, their spiritual light enabled them only *partly* to understand, and there was much connected with it on which they still needed *revelation*, insomuch that "unto them it

* See the truly excellent and learned pamphlet of Rev. Robert Williamson, of Ascog, which has just come into my hands, entitled, "The Gospels prior in point of time to the Epistles, and therefore not the products of a Post-Apostolic period."

was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things that are now reported unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (verse 12). One would think that with such clear distinctions as these, presented to us so strikingly in Scripture itself, confusion should be difficult of occurrence, and easily cleared away when it occurs. In particular, the difference between the inspiration of a writer of the word, and the spiritual illumination of a believing reader of it, should not require much to make it patent or enforce attention to it.

Accordingly I had purposed very briefly to indicate this source of confusion and pass on; when, to my astonishment, Dr Marcus Dods's sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration" came into my hands, and turned out, on perusal, to be from first to last another instance of the same confounding of things which differ so patently; and so I have to tarry in this connection, and to point out the fallacies which pervade my esteemed friend's discourse, and the one great leading cause or source of them. I need not say that I have a very sore feeling of disappointment in having any such duty to discharge, because I cordially recognise in Dr Dods such uncommon faculty of spiritual intuition as makes me a glad and grateful learner when he comes forward to teach, as he is in many respects so well entitled to do. In fact, I honestly believe him to be possessed of a considerable share of what he here describes as "inspiration," though of course I do not believe him to be inspired. I would, however, require to believe *that*, if I admitted that he put things on a right footing, when he says, concerning Paul, "I believe him to be inspired, because he brings light to my spirit, which can only have proceeded from God." The inspiration which the Westminster Confession avers is no subjective faculty, enabling its possessor either personally to see or publicly to teach; but an acting of the divine will to secure, as its objective result, a Scripture, or written Word, of which, through the instrumentality of human authorship, God shall be the author. But completely passing over this, the true distinguishing and essential idea of Inspiration, Dr Dods was fatally bound to go wrong from the very outset, and extremely likely both to start new errors by the way, and to land at last in a false conception of the use of Holy Scripture. I think it will be easy to show that he has done all these things.

I have no intention to charge Dr Dods with denying the divine authorship of the Scriptures. But he has not *affirmed* their divine authorship: and yet he has published a sermon on "Revelation and *Inspiration*." On the first page of it we find these words,—"Some other sacred books profess to be a revelation, to be written by God or at His dictation; but the Bible, without saying anything about its authorship, at once commences its task of giving a clear and consecutive and complete account of the various revelations of Himself which God has made to man. It is to this aspect of the Bible as a record of historical revelations I desire now to direct attention."

Now, while there is in this no direct denial that the Bible—this "record of historical revelations"—is a *divine* record, as truly divine as the revelations it records are divine, it must be obvious that it looks askance at that idea, and seems to put it in some peril. It speaks of other sacred books claiming "to be written by God;" and against this their *false* claim, it fails to present the same as a *true* claim on the Bible's behalf. Farther, it *seems*, at least, and may be held, to countenance that gross perversion of the true idea of inspiration on which Coleridge's intemperate and flaming wrath ran out at such length—the notion that it is identical with "dictation;" for it is hard to say whether Dr Dods means these two things to be alternative or equivalent,—"written by God *or* at His dictation." And though I will not believe that he means to deny that the Bible "says anything," anywhere, "about its authorship," but only that it "commences its task" without doing so; yet all this is fitted to produce a painful impression, and to suggest the idea that Dr Dods shrinks from maintaining the doctrine that "it pleased God Himself to commit His revelation to writing." For here was the place to affirm that doctrine distinctly, namely, when he was professedly about to proceed to speak of *inspiration*. Defined along the lines of its necessity and its result, inspiration can be intelligently and somewhat hopefully discussed; at least we shall know what we are about, and may expect to be able to maintain some orderliness of thought. But when the great end for the securing of which anything that shall be called specifically and peculiarly "inspiration" is needed, is thrown out of view, everything specific and peculiar in inspiration is lost sight of, and something is certain to be presented to our view which never needed *that* nor any other distinctive word to express it. I put it to every intelligent reader of Dr Dods's sermon, and to my friend himself, whether this is not exactly what has happened in his hands. The inspiration to which he "directs attention" is itself nothing specific, for it secures or accomplishes nothing specifically different from what might have been, in some degree, though, no doubt, a less degree, secured by uninspired writers,—honest, able, and competent, but uninspired. It would be perfectly hopeless, on such a scheme, to define the words "canonical" and "apocryphal;" and, what is much more serious, it would be impossible to secure a fixed and honourable application of them. If inspiration is not a thing of thorough distinctiveness, but of measure and degree, in which others besides the writers of the Scripture have shared, then there is and can be no sure enclosure, railing in certain books as canonical, and barring out others as apocryphal. The sacred books merge into the world's honest literature generally, without a break, blending and shading off imperceptibly, without any dividing line which we could be given to understand that we had either transgressed or respected—to which we could either do justice or injustice. I do not believe that Dr Dods intends that his speculations should

result in anything like this; but such is certainly their logical outgoing; and it was bound to be the outcome of his descriptions of an inspiration not designed to secure the supreme divine authorship of the writings concerned. This inspiration, in fact, may be defined as being, just everything *except* what could effect that result. It is a compound of a little, or rather not a little, *revelation* properly so called; of a more than ordinary amount of *grace*, in the form of spiritual light or illumination; of what may be called, favourable providential circumstances; and of those particular gifts and graces that are required for the office of the Christian ministry: all resulting in what is called "special equipment." The verification of this estimate or analysis would just require me to transcribe continuously the four paragraphs of the sermon beginning on page 12, and ending on page 15; and I do not suppose that its accuracy will be questioned. No intelligent person can read these pages without seeing by the naked eye, so to speak, that the inspiration there described was certainly not confined to the writers of Holy Scripture. There were most certainly others besides them who "had the revelation at first hand:" who were by divine grace "set in a right attitude to Him they were to reflect, and made sensitive to everything in Him that was of the highest value;" who were "one with Him in character and will;" who were partakers of the promise, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him:" who were "emptied of self-seeking and worldly ways of looking at things:" who could therefore "utter authoritatively what they saw, knowing that it was not their own will they were declaring, but the will of God:" and of whom it could not be doubted that they had been made partakers of a spiritual gift that "illuminated the mind as enthusiasm does, by stimulating and elevating it, and enriched the memory as love does, by intensifying the interest in a certain object and by making the mind sensitive to its impressions and retentive of them." What, therefore, these persons, being thus properly and "specially equipped," might choose to write in the same kind with what the Scripture writers (properly so called) had written, would have the same sort of claim to be included among the sacred writings; and rules for the formation of a canon on such a scheme of things it would be simply and absolutely impossible to frame.

Little wonder that, having reached no higher, clearer, more distinctive idea of inspiration than this, Dr Dods should himself get impatient with it, and so disrespectful towards it as to propose to turn it out of court, finishing off with making a present of it to anybody who chooses to accept it, with certification that little is either lost or gained by its rejection or acceptance. And so the train of speculation winds up with what appears on the left side of these parallel columns, and which, were I getting impatient with the word "inspiration" too, I would propose to replace with what I put on the right side:—

"For my part, I do not care what meaning a man attaches to the word 'inspired,' nor, indeed, whether he says these epistles are inspired or not, so long as he accepts their teaching.

The only inspiration worth contending for is the ability to see and represent truly a revelation of God.

I do not believe what Paul says, because I first believe him to be inspired; but I believe him to be inspired because he brings light to my spirit which can only have proceeded from God."

For my part, I do not care what meaning a man attaches to the word "inspired," nor, indeed, whether he says these epistles are inspired or not, so long as he accepts their *divine authorship.*

The only inspiration worth contending for is the ability to represent a revelation of God *so as that it shall be God's representation of it.*

I *do* believe what Paul says, because he is inspired; and because he is inspired I may expect, and I do pray that he may bring light to my spirit such as could only proceed from God.

If the Westminster doctrine of inspiration be true, defined as it is by its result, in a volume of God's own writing, then the volume is that "Word of God" with which the Spirit of God may for ever abide, and by which He may speak and judge in the Church of God continually. It is the voice of God, the living word, which like God Himself who dwells in it, liveth and abideth for ever. Hence it is surely incorrect, though painfully consistent with an inspiration falling short of that of our Confession, to speak, as Dr Dods does, of "the Bible not doing its work till it takes us past itself, and makes us *independent* of it" (page 18). If it is a *divine* record of divine revelation, then it is the continuance and perpetuation of that revelation, and to talk of becoming "independent of it," is to contradict the spiritual instincts of faith and the whole reason of the case. For in that case it is the voice of Christ, and it is impossible to set Christ's voice over against Christ Himself, contradistinguishingly, so as to be able, with any show of reason, to represent it as fulfilling no higher function in communicating to us the true knowledge of God, than the woman of Samaria to her fellow-citizens, insomuch that we might warrantably say to it, as Dr Dods recommends its believing readers to say, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." On the contrary, we ought rather, if such apostrophe is to be employed, exactly to reverse the line of thought on which it runs, and saw, "Now we believe *just* because of thy saying; for it is by *thy* saying (because it is *His* saying) that we have heard *Him.*" In like manner, on the view of inspiration which I plead for, I would not contradistinguish so sharply and absolutely as Dr Dods does, between "belief in Christ on the authority of Scripture," and "belief in Him from personal acquaintance;" for belief in Him, on the authority of Scripture, is belief in Him on *His own* authority; being in fact the living flash of identification between the word as written and the living voice of Him whose word it is. "For this cause we thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of

God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you who believe" (1 Thes. ii. 13). And finally, instead of saying with my friend in the last word of counsel which he builds upon his theory of inspiration, "Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of Christ, *but* it is Christ Himself who is the light of every man that cometh into the world," I would be inclined to say, "Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of Christ, *and* Christ Himself (through *their* testimony, because it is *His own*) is the light of every one that cometh into the world." I repeat that living faith is the living flash of identification of the written word with the voice of God; but if the word written be not committed to writing by Him, this contradistinguishing may be both warrantable and inevitable, and the identification desiderated shall be impossible. And then it is simply a tie, or an even chance, between scepticism and fanaticism. If, on the contrary, God has Himself committed His revelation to writing, then by that written word as His own, the divine Spirit may speak and judge; and both scepticism and fanaticism are barred out for ever. I can scarcely doubt that, in the main, Dr Dods agrees with me in all this, though I think the last two pages of his sermon point somewhat in the direction of fanaticism; and the fatal tendency of his silence concerning our Confession's doctrine of inspiration, and his attempt (apparently) to replace it with what does not secure a divinely written Scripture, was almost certain to crop out (in the case of an earnest devotional spirit like his) in the way of at least seeming to assert or desiderate a direct fellowship with Christ "independent" of the Bible, and as supplementing the insufficiency of a Scripture not affirmed to be divine. How could I so fail in my duty as to abstain from asking my friend what he can possibly mean by a "*private* revelation of God to ourselves," a "close and impressive revelation, by which we may be more affected than we have ever been by the Bible?" I do not believe that he intends fanaticism; but if he did, I ask in what fitter forms of speech he could couch it?

In a word, this sermon is unworthy of the fine gifts of one whom we all esteem so much, and of the *præclarum venerabile nomen* which these gifts enable him to wear so worthily and well. If he would but maintain and defend the Westminster doctrines of inspiration, as he is so much better able to do than I am, he would find within its impregnable entrenching circumvallation—its glorious "wall of fire round about"—abundant scope for all legitimate enquiry into the "special equipment" which the Scripture writers possessed for recording the revelations which God made to man: he would assist very admirably in proving that there can be no position so fitted to promote honourably free thought among reverential students; that it is, as I have said, at once the minimum and the maximum of what we ought to unite in believing and proclaiming on the subject; and that it represents nothing as inconsistent with inspiration which is consistent with

truth and honour, in a word with the divine law, among human authors,—the plan and condescension of God being such that He has accomplished or secured His own authorship of Holy Scripture through the instrumentality of the authorship of men, whom He reduced not to the level of machines, but made the real and intelligent fellow-workers with God. Doubtless connected with the position, "The Bible is the record of divine revelation," there must be many fine lines of thinking, many interesting topics of enquiry. Will the topics of enquiry be less interesting, or the lines of thought less fascinating, which connect themselves with the position, "The Bible is the *divine* record of divine revelation"? I simply scout the idea that I am less free, or more "narrow," because I maintain the latter and grander doctrine. Dr Dods, I am sure, will not assign to me offensive epithets like these. But I am very sorry that his sermon should even seem to give countenance to those orators who are now found attacking any man who defends the noble Westminster Confession.

4. Finally, we must distinguish between the two similar but thoroughly distinct propositions,—"The Bible is the Word of God," and "The Word of God is in the Bible."

Whether the Bible *is* the Word of God or not, it was impossible but that it should, if at all a genuine and averagely correct record, have somewhat of the Word of God in it. The revelation of which it is a record, is a historical revelation in which the Lord God appeared again and again, one may say habitually, as a historical personage directly expressing his mind by word of mouth, according to the sublime language of the Psalm, "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken." In such a record, therefore, composed on any principle that can be imagined, such as would render it of any real use whatsoever, it could not but be that not a little of the word of God should be found on its pages. The words of God would be *in* the Bible. But that is very far from amounting to the import of the proposition, "The Bible *is* the word of God."

Let the contents of the Bible be analysed with a view to the interests of this distinction, and they may be arranged under three departments:—

(1.) First, there are the direct utterances of God Himself as the immediate speaker, interlocutor, or *dramatis persona*, for the time being, in each several case. The Bible behoved to record or engross them. Hence we have such as the following:—The first creative utterance, "Let there be light:" the divine conference, "Let us make man in our image:" the covenant of life inaugurated, "Of every tree of the garden," &c.; and the ordinance of marriage, "It is not good that the man should be alone:" God's call to Adam after the fall, "Where art thou?" and his addresses to Satan, to Adam, and to Eve respectively: the divine expostulation with Cain, "Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen?" conversations with Noah, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: God's words to Moses at the

bush: full injunctions and directions towards the exodus: the ten commandments: whole chapters of directions to Moses: onward through the Psalms, where such direct utterances of God occur as those in the 2d and 110th Psalms, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec:" again, whole chapters of utterances to the prophets beginning, "Thus saith the Lord:" sermons, parables, speeches, conversations, by God incarnate on the earth: His personal expostulation with Saul from heaven, "Why persecutest thou me?" the words of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, "Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have called them:" seven letters to the Churches from God incarnate, from His glory: and lastly, His final words till He come again, "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star: and behold! I come quickly: Amen."—All these, it is readily granted, are the words of God. I do not say that they are inspired, for inspiration is predicted not of merely *spoken* divine words recorded honestly, unless also they be divinely recorded. But all these are the words of God, and recorded in the Scriptures. Thus the Word of God is in the Bible.

(2.) But, secondly, there are in the Bible also utterances not of God, but of various of His creatures, some of them taking shape evidently under divine grace and teaching, though not always under revelation, others sufficiently far from indicating that they had been given either by inspiration or as part of the truth of God. Adam's evasive, servile excuse, "The woman gave unto me:" Eve's similarly deceptive plea, "The serpent beguiled me:" Cain's reckless, defiant insult to his God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" the blasphemy of Job's wife: the letter of Rabshakeh; and that of Claudias Lysias: the despairing cry of Judas: a quotation from a heathen poet: and utterances of the devil himself. No one certainly imagines these to be inspired, or in any sense divine. But what then? they are *recorded by inspiration.* They are, by inspiration, engrossed into God's book, and in that sense form part of God's book, or inspired Scriptures, precisely as engrossed matter appearing in any book of human authorship forms part of such book without creating any perplexity as to the author's precise relation to it. A human writer, composing a book, in the main a new work, may quote and engross in it the sayings, the speeches, the letters of others,—nay, sayings and letters and speeches of his own,—which may have appeared in other publications, or never been published before at all. Why may not God? And if a human author may quote into his new work old sayings of his own, without suggesting the idea that the new work is any less entirely *his* than the old sayings which he quotes; and without making himself responsible for the sayings of others that he quotes; why may it not be so equally when God is the author?

(3.) But, thirdly, to complete this view of Scripture's contents: there is the entire new matter—neither utterances by the Creator nor

any of His creatures—in the setting of which these utterances appear: new matter coming fresh from the pens of the human writers, and shaping itself into all variety of forms,—the narrative, the prophetic, the poetical, the psalmodic, the apothegmatical, the hortatory, the epistolary,—in short, the "diverse ways" in which God at "sundry times" hath spoken unto the fathers and unto their children, by the prophets and by His Son and by the apostles. And here again, considering this wonderful diversity, it could scarcely fail that there should be embodied into his complete work not a few extracts for which, *as in themselves*, no wise man would dream of claiming inspiration, but merely that by inspiration they had been recorded and commented on. But does this militate against the position that the whole Bible is the word of God? A human author, when the plan and drift of his work require it, never hesitates to quote into his book, an Act of Parliament —figures from a statistical table,—information from the Dooms-day Book,—from a volume of national heraldry—from a genealogical tree, from the British Museum or Bodleian Library,—from private family records, or the archives of a kingdom. If such liberty is accorded to human authors, why not to God? If it pleased Him to commit His revelation to writing, who shall limit Him in the plan and range of method of authorship His infinite wisdom shall see fit to adopt? Hence if documents, Elohistic and Jehovistic, as the critics say, can be proved to have been drawn upon in the composition of Genesis, there is nothing in the doctrine of Inspiration to prevent it, or to prevent the quiet belief of it; and if reverential and truly learned criticism and historical investigation would only consent to confine themselves to their legitimate functions, there is, among intelligent believing men, as little desire, as there is power, to limit or hinder them. To the great truth, however, for which we believe we have God's own testimony, namely, that the record of His revelation is not less divine than the revelation itself is, and is indeed that revelation lighted up with perpetual vitality and glory,—to this most glorious truth, all the efforts of criticism and historical enquiry stand related, in respect of magnitude, as the little ant-hills which a spade may shovel aside, to the glories of Mont Blanc, or rather of Mount Zion which Jehovah hath chosen for His rest.

INDICATING THE LINE OF PROOF.

Hitherto we have been occupied exclusively in guarding the position, in merely stating the question and protecting it from the deranging influence of misapprehensions as to its real meaning, and of confusions of idea concerning it. It now remains that I should briefly indicate the line of proof. Of course it must be borne in mind that I am not composing a treatise, but merely giving some hints.

And indeed the argument on the *merits* may be somewhat easily dealt with, if that on the *meaning* has been successfully disposed of.

1. In proceeding to prove that in the Old and New Testaments, we have what the Lord Himself committed to writing, it is matter of thankfulness that there is no antecedent improbability requiring to be vanquished or got rid of. None but an atheist would attempt to bar the proof by the allegation of impossibility. And no man can allege improbability on the ground of its being improbable that God should be an author or writer at all; for, whether of the Old and New Testament Scriptures or not, an author and a writer God certainly is. He is the author of the ten commandments, and that He wrote them is affirmed with extraordinary emphasis and frequency. "And the LORD said unto Moses, come up unto me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments WHICH I HAVE WRITTEN" (Exod. xxiv. 12). And when God did as He had thus said, it is especially noted that His promise was literally fulfilled: "He gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him in Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, WRITTEN WITH THE FINGER OF GOD" (Exod. xxxi. 18). Very expressly, also, as the last circumstance rehearsed, while Moses descends from the mountain, is this most remarkable fact recorded: that not only were "the tables the work of God," but "the writing was the writing of God, graven on the tables" (Exod. xxxii. 16). And three separate times does Moses, in Deuteronomy, recall the wondrous specialty: "And he wrote them upon two tables of stone;" "And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me;" "Tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (Deut. iv. 13; v. 22; ix. 10). To this at least, if not to more extensive materials of authorship, the Lord refers when He says in Hosea viii. 12, "I have written unto him the great things of my law." That He is, therefore, an author and a writer; that He has published writings of His own, more or less extensive, under His own divine hand and "finger," is absolutely certain. Against His being the author or writer of Holy Scripture "wholly," there is therefore no feasible probability of any kind. Ground for reasonable prejudice against the great doctrine which, with all honest signatories of the Westminster Confession, I assert, maintain, and defend, there is absolutely none.

2. On the contrary, all reasonable probabilities are in favour of it: in favour, that is, of the expectation that God—whose glory is thus seen to be in no respect trenched upon by His condescending to become an author—should be the author of the Holy Scriptures.

That God should give a merely human record of a divine revelation does not commend itself to enlightened reason. It would seem to be such a violation of all suitableness and proportion as we could not attribute to the all-wise God. "*Men* do not put new wine into old bottles: they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." And here, *preservation* is especially in view. "For the

better *preserving* and propagating of the truth," says our Confession, "the Lord was pleased to commit the same wholly to writing." Also,—"for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world." How these ends were to be secured by a fallible record of an infallible revelation; that is to say, how its original infallibility could be brought to bear for future serviceableness if fallibly represented, it is hard to conceive. And, above all, if the record is designed by divine wisdom to be a prolongation and perpetuation of the revelation itself, then the expectation that the one shall be as truly divine as the other, may surely most warrantably be indulged in the very highest degree. And this the Westminster Divines are to be understood as not obscurely hinting at, but rather somewhat distinctly alleging, when they say—"which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased." "Those *former* ways:" so that, in their judgment, Holy Scripture is God's *present* and perpetual way of revealing Himself and declaring His will unto His Church. In that case, it would appear that God must keep the record in His own hand, as much as the revelation, since in point of fact it is still revelation of Himself in which He is engaged, when He is engaged in bringing about the composition of the record, and in commending and securing the use of it in all after-ages. It cannot, then, be under the superintendence of His mere ordinary providence that the volume shall be composed and published. To accomplish the end in view, God, it would appear, must create a new thing on the earth, yet not novel in kind, but the same in kind, though on larger scale, as when He wrote the ten words with His own finger on tables of stone. If He is to go on revealing Himself and His will, "those former ways" of His doing so "being now ceased," it would seem probable, in the very highest degree, that He will do this in the way of giving a divine and therefore infallible representation and record of "those former ways" themselves. Were the problem presented in some such terms as these: Given a long series of divine revelations which are now to cease; and given, that God designs still to go on revealing Himself; required the most probable method by which this may be accomplished:—I can, for my part, imagine no solution but that the Lord should Himself commit that series of revelations to writing, so as that He might set His face to the record as being as truly His own as the revelations originally were. At all events, I greatly doubt whether any reasonable being in all the universe would have suggested that the problem might be solved and the object secured, by a human, fallible, and imperfect tradition of the revelations that had come to a close. That, certainly, could make not even the slightest approximation towards being equivalent to a resumption, prolongation, or continuance of them. Nothing short of an infallible, divinely perfect embodiment of them in written discourse could meet the requirements of the case, or perpetuate them

as the living oracles of God. For not a dead history is desiderated, but a "word of God which shall live and abide for ever"—for ever settled on heaven, for ever vocal on earth.

3. In the view of every reverential believing mind, this probability intensifies into certainty when we consider in what permanent relation the Spirit of God is to stand to these Scriptures, and what use He is to make of them as the ages move along. He is to dwell in them. He is to dwell in them, even so as that, instinct with His vitalizing presence, they shall live and abide for ever, and be themselves verily spirit and life. He is to mirror His own mind in them to all ages, committing Himself to them as a satisfactory expression of His own thoughts, of "the things of the Spirit,"—a satisfactory presentation of the character of Him who is the image of the invisible God,—a satisfactory apocalypse or unveilment of the gracious purposes and love of the everlasting Father in the Son of His love. In them the triune God is to dwell and shine and speak; insomuch that spiritual desire may not fanatically, but with divine warrant, entreat Him who dwells between the cherubims to shine forth; to open our eyes that we may see wondrous things out of His law; and to unstop deaf ears that men may hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. A combination of diverse yet concurrent figures of speech thus becomes available. And considering that the Holy Scriptures, by the relation in which the Holy Spirit stands to them, thus become the mirror in which alone Christ is to be seen shining—"the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star"—until He come again without sin unto salvation: the garments of light and revelations, clothed with which He walketh among the seven golden candlesticks, and we behold the goings of our King in the sanctuary: the telephone by which He livingly, even by His own voice (which His sheep may know and *do* know, and which He never will repudiate or disown) still "testifieth these things unto the Churches:" spiritual reason abhors the thought of fallibility and imperfection being predicable of them—demands that they be, in the simplest meaning of the terms, "the written word of God," having God literally for their author and writer. To a soul that has bowed before the authority and power with which faith recognises the Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures, the idea that that Holy Spirit of God stands only in the same relation to these Scriptures as to any good pious book of mere human authorship, is utterly intolerable: and adoring faith and spiritual reason demand that it be a divine instrument wherewith the divine Spirit shall abide in all ages so intimately related, achieving by means of it results so divine as the regeneration of the souls of men, and then the ever-growing revelation to them of the beauty, and communication of the mind, of the Lord. A mere human Scripture, used in such manner and for such ends by the divine Spirit, is to sanctified reason inconceivable. It is an instinct of faith to predicate perfection of every work of God: but faith rejects the idea of a perfect prophet who should teach the

will of God for our salvation by less than a perfect, infallible, divine word or lesson book: and the adoring Church of God continues to adore in reverential silence, of one mind with her God in feeling that every mouth is stopped by His demand, "What more could I have done for my vineyard that I have not done?" *because* it is not open to reply that it still remains He should commit His revelation to writing. I do not know that the fear of God could have suggested it. But I rejoice to know that there is no ground in this direction to dread the imperilment of the doxology, "Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." He hath anticipated the suggestion: and from first to last the Scriptures are the Word of God written, even as the pristine revelations were the revelations of God spoken.

4. Let the various characteristics and qualities attributed to the Scriptures be gathered together into a focus and steadily contemplated: and let any reasonable being say whether the impression which such an exercise produces be less than that the Scriptures are perfect, infallible, divine,—the writings of God Himself. It is quite impossible that I can here conduct or exemplify this process: a very few of the more striking attributions are all that I can present. Is not the Scripture absolutely identified with the omniscient God as its author, when prescience is predicated of it in the remarkable statement; "The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. iii. 8)? Again, is not a quality alleged of it such as could come only from divine authorship, when the Son of God Himself, in a quiet parenthesis such as implies that what He is to allege is on all hands understood and admitted—declares that "the Scripture cannot be broken" (John x. 35)? And when such an one as Peter the aged in his inimitably beautiful reminiscence of the transfiguration speaking of the voice from the excellent glory, hesitates not to speak of Holy Scripture as "a more sure word of prophecy,"—more sure, not intrinsically, for that is inconceivable, but in respect of being both more permanent and susceptible of more abundant verification—is there a single form of speech remaining into which human language could be compelled in order to affirm the divine authorship of the Word of God?

5. There is a fine argument—or rather vein of argument—for the divine authorship of Scripture in, what I may call, the whole relation to Scripture in which the Lord Jesus presents Himself. I cannot work that vein here and now: I can merely indicate its existence,—and in some such way as this. Can you imagine the second person of the Godhead, Him who cometh from above and is above all, who spake what He had heard and seen with the Father before the worlds were, making such use of any writings that were not His Father's as He made of the Old Testament Scriptures? Hear Him quote them, as of final authority: hear Him read them, and reverentially close the

book as one fully satisfied with them : hear Him speak of the fulfilling of them as that in which His soul reposed with supreme and serenest peace :—"This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke iv. 21). What words soever He, the Eternal Word made flesh, was uttering of new were divine : what words of written Scripture (forgive the pleonasm) He chose to interblend with His own divine speech—were they less divine ? Does it ever enter into the imagination of the thoughts of any reader of the Gospels, that when Christ Jesus quotes the law or the psalms or the prophets, the quoted matter is less divine than the divine direct speech which at the moment the mouth of the Lord is uttering ? Are not His divine thoughts finding expression as divine in the written words which He adduces to express them, as in the fresh and new divine words that are issuing from His gracious lips ? Who does not shrink from even thinking it necessary to deny that there is here anything at all resembling the "putting of a piece of new cloth on an old garment?" All is of a piece. All is equally divine. The same rhythm and undertone of infallible truth, authority, and power pervade the quoted words and the divine infallible comment and exposition for which they are adduced. And when, abstaining from argument, exposition, comment, He makes quotation pure and simple, who can fail to be most profoundly impressed with the voice of the Son of God repeating as of unappellable authority the written Scripture which cannot be broken ? Thus when the planetary limitations of this little world give way before His view, and the spiritual world unveils its awful kingdom of darkness before Him, with its advancing prince daring him to combat, and if ever the words of the Eternal God were needed they are needed now, three times the words of Moses in Deuteronomy are quoted as the words of God : —"It is written :" "It is written :" "It is written."

Yes, "It is written :" It is the Scripture. And that's enough. For the Scripture cannot be broken. "And the devil leaveth him."

Is it possible that the whole question of the Lord God Emmanuel's relation to His own Scriptures is going to be raised among us ? I am not sure but that something has been said that may require to be unsaid unless that question *is* to be raised. I confess, also, that I *have* heard a strange whisper, with the leading word "nescience" in it ! But I scarcely expect to hear it again. It is true that the God-Man, Emmanuel, God with us, came not to teach science or criticism : yet even concerning science and criticism I know not on what ground any of His creatures shall dare to allege "nescience,"—or indeed concerning anything past, present, future, possible, or conceivable, excepting alone that one only instance in which He Himself has affirmed nescience (Mark xiii. 32). Who shall dare to allege another ? But though He came not to execute the office of a critic, He came to execute the office of a prophet, and that by revealing to us by His Word and Spirit the will of God for our salvation. And to allege concerning Him the least shadow of nescience there, I would fain

trust His entire Church on earth will resent as blasphemy, with instant, intuitive, and unanimous abhorrence.

6. And now, finally, the most direct, clear, and abundant evidence of the divine authorship of Holy Scripture is found in the terms in which the later Scripture writers quote from the earlier ones.

It may be safely said, I think, that the Church, during the present century at least, has trusted too much, in the discussion of this question, to the word "inspiration." It is not a word of one invariable meaning. It is not even a scriptural word, in this application: and the Greek term, *theopneustic*, may raise questions as to its real import. It is therefore far from wise to lay so much duty on one poor vocable. Its powers, in fact, have been strained beyond endurance, till it has been fain to go a-begging for help—somewhat pitiably and not with much success—to our old friends "Verbal" and "Plenary," as we have seen. And this has opened the door to a good deal of unprofitable jangling about the *modus*, or process, of inspiration; a subject of which, from the nature of the case, we can know nothing except what God may have been pleased to reveal,—and who that has professed to teach concerning it, has professed to teach what God has revealed concerning it? All this is the more to be regretted because it is hard to see any reasonable inducement or feasible temptation to risk so much on the doubtful fortunes of the word "inspiration." If a single word, or brief phrase, shall be required to do so much duty, then an infinitely safer investment is made in the expression—"divine authorship." That is the nearest brief equivalent to the beautiful proposition of our Confession:—"It pleased the Lord to commit the same wholly to writing." And that is the state of the question,—divine authorship, yea or nay?—under which (the average Christian intelligence sitting in judgment and craving satisfaction) it may most satisfactorily go to proof.

Viewing the matter, then, in this plain light, look at such a chapter, for instance, as the first of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It sparkles with a galaxy of quotation from the Psalms. The quotations are as follows:—Psalms ii. 7, lxxxix. 26, xcvii. 7, civ. 4, xlv. 6, 7, cii. 25, cx. 1. Now of these seven, three are remarkably distinguished from the other four; I mean the first two and the last. They are in these words:—(1.) "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." (2.) "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." (3.) "Sit thou at my right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool." And the remarkable thing about these quotations is that on turning to the Psalms from which they are quoted severally, we find that in all these cases, God is the direct speaker, the interlocutor, the *dramatis persona* for the time being. No wonder, therefore, though quotation in each of these cases is introduced with the words, "He said," or "Said He," or "He saith." That is intelligible, if the book quoted from be recognised as simply a genuine and authentic production—genuine as opposed to forgery, and authentic as opposed to fable. It need not

be a book of divine authorship. If it has simply recorded veraciously that God said these things, they may reliably be quoted from it as having been said by Him.

But the remarkable thing is that the other four quotations are equally attributed to God. They also are introduced with a "Saith He," or "He said." Yet when we turn to the Psalms from which these quotations are made, we find not the least reason to imagine that God is the speaker, or interlocutor, or *dramatis persona*, now. Yet it is not only "*He said*, Thou art my Son," "and again, (*he said*), I will be to him a Father" (ver. 5), and, "*He said*, Sit thou at my right hand" (ver. 13):—but, "*He said*, Let all the angels of God worship him" (ver. 6); and, "*He saith*, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire" (ver. 7); and, "Unto the Son *he saith*, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (ver. 8); "And (*he saith*), Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth" (ver. 10). In short, these utterances—the last four utterances—with which, save for the doctrine now concerned, God had nothing more to do than with the propositions of Newton's Principia —are attributed to God exactly as in the case of utterances that came directly from His sacred mouth as the direct speaker at the time. Now this is unintelligible, inexplicable, except on one only supposition, namely, that God is the author, the writer, of these Psalms, whether He is at any time the speaker or interlocutor in them or not. If you turn to the 45th Psalm, you find it is no *dramatis persona*, no speaker, introduced for the time being, but just the author of the Psalm, who says, "Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom" (ver. 6). In the 97th Psalm, it is not the Lord, as interlocutor for the time, that says, "Worship him, all ye gods," or "Let all the angels of God worship him" (ver. 7). And in the 104th Psalm, it is not the Lord but the Psalmist who says, "Who maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire" (ver. 4). And the same thing is true in the 102nd Psalm: the invocation to the Messiah, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth" (ver. 25), is the language of the author or writer of the Psalm, and not of any speaker whom He introduces as interlocutor. Yet all these statements are attributed to God as being the author of *them* as truly as when "*He saith* unto the Son, Sit on my right hand."

Now look, in any one case, say Ps. civ. 4, what this implies. If it is God that saith, "Who maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire," then, as there is nothing peculiar in this *verse*, segregating and secluding it to the honours of divine authorship, aside from the rest of the Psalm, it follows that the whole Psalm is of divine authorship. Farther, as there is nothing peculiar in this *Psalm*, segregating and secluding *it* to the honours of divine authorship more than any other Psalm, it follows that the whole Psalter is of divine authorship. And still farther, as there is nothing peculiar in the *Psalter*,

segregating and secluding *it* to the honours of divine authorship, aside from that Scripture to which it is indebted for being thus quoted and honoured, it follows that the whole Scripture is of divine authorship, insomuch that whatsoever is quoted from it may be heralded by the phrase, "Saith the Lord," just as warrantably as when "*The Lord said* to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool."

This may seem to be a very large amount of conclusion to draw from its being written in Heb. i. 7, "Of the angels *he saith*, Who maketh his angels spirits." But who will shew me how the conclusion can be barred, or where it can be checked or abbreviated? I believe that one such quotation is enough to prove the divine authorship of the Scriptures; and here you have them lying thick, the sheen of them like stars on the sea. And this is not the only constellation, the sort of Pleiades or seven stars, in the heaven of Scripture, where exactly the same pregnant style of quotation is to be found. "Again God limiteth a certain day, saying in David (in the 95th Psalm), To-day, after so long a time" (Heb. iv. 7). God is not interlocutor or speaker in that Psalm: and unless He be the writer and supreme author of it, such quotation is inexplicable. Again "The Holy Ghost saith (in that same 95th Psalm), To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 7). And what conclusion is inevitable from the following striking allegation, "God spake in a certain place (namely in Gen. ii. 2) of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works" (Heb. iv. 4)? When we turn to the second chapter of Genesis, we find that this is no direct utterance from the divine lips, as when *He said*, "Let there be light;" and if He be not the writer and author of the chapter, as truly as He was the speaker of the word, "Let there be light," the words are most unwarrantably put into His sacred mouth. And this is not the only part of the second chapter of Genesis attributed to the Lord, over and above direct speech of His. "Two, *saith he*, shall be one flesh" (1 Cor. vi. 16). Yet *He* saith not this, unless He be accounted the writer of these words, as truly as He was the speaker of the words, "It is not good that the man should be alone." The same rule is evidently proceeded upon—I mean the law of the indifference or equivalence of God's scriptured words with His spoken words—when it is said, "Wherefore, *he saith* (in Psalm lxviii. 18), When he ascended on high he led captivity captive" (Eph. iv. 8). Again, as in Acts xiii. 35, "He [namely, the same who had said, 'I will give you the sure mercies of David' (verse 34), and (verse 35), 'Thou art my Son'] saith also in another Psalm (the 16th), Thou shalt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption." And not to adduce farther evidence: as truly as these words in the second Psalm belong to God, as the direct speaker of them, "Thou art my Son;" so truly do those with which the Psalm opens; for "Thou, O God, by the mouth of

thy servant David hast said, Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing?" (Acts iv. 25).

Or if one more proof in this kind shall be adduced, let it be from the same equivalence when indicated by our Lord in His conflict with the enemy in the wilderness. Twice out of the three instances in which Jesus says, "It is written," He might be held to be attributing what He quotes to God as at first hand the speaker. This is not inevitable; though the categorical imperative in the great sayings, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Deut. vi. 16), and "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Deut. vi. 13), would no doubt justify their being regarded as of truly divine authorship, and therefore of divine or final authority. But that other saying, "Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deut. viii. 6), *that* has no right to be drawn upon as unappellable, and as equally divine with the others, unless the simple fact that "it is written" be equivalent unto "God hath said it." But these sayings are all alike wielded by the blessed combatant with equal confidence as the sword of the Lord, of heavenly temper, of divine workmanship. "It is scriptured" is enough for Him. Is it not all alike His Father's word, of His Father's authorship throughout, as of His Father's direct utterance oftentimes; always His Father's Scripture, which cannot be broken?

Of course a treatise might be written: but, as I said, I shall decline the ambition of prolonging an argument that may surely by this time be warrantably considered as closed?

And now, in laying down my pen, I may be permitted to say that since writing the Prefatory Note (which, unlike prefaces generally, was really written first), my sense of dissatisfaction with the College Committee's Report, as it bears on this great and vital question, has increased, and I am growingly persuaded that I might have spoken more strongly and still been within my warrant. Our godly forefathers used to speak more plainly about "the enemy" than we do, and trace his hand in their troubles more frequently. I am not sure but that it would assist our charity and brotherly kindness were we to follow their example, and recognise more distinctly the presence of the adversary who has such a hand in making us adversaries among ourselves. And as I had occasion recently to say that I could not conceive of Satan doing a more *cruel* thing just now, on the platform of Scotland and within the pale of the Free Church, than to put fire between the young ministers and the old: so I may be allowed to add that I can hardly conceive of him doing a *cleverer* thing than to induce either old or young to enter into battle in a day like this armed with the wretched decimal fraction of a splinter, "these revelations *are* committed unto writing," instead of the glorious gigantic battle-axe, "It pleased the Lord to commit them to writing." We were assured by Dr Rainy at the recent meeting of Commission of Assembly, that were

the question of the inspiration of Scripture to be raised in our Church it would be easily settled. I am delighted to hear it. It will not, certainly, be for anything that *he* has done to secure so desirable an issue! And I think I can assure him that when the discussion comes, it shall take place on the grand and simple Westminster Confession state of the question, and not on the emasculated representation of it which the College Committee have chosen so ridiculously to call "not only the technical ground of the Confession which must regulate ecclesiastical procedure, but really the essential and fundamental truth which it is vital to maintain"!!!

THE END.

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